

Legislative Council Panel on Housing

Review of Enhanced Partnering Arrangements among Estate Management Advisory Committees and Non-government Organisations in Public Rental Housing Estates

Purpose

This paper informs Members of the review findings on the implementation of the enhanced partnering arrangements among Estate Management Advisory Committees (EMACs) and non-government organisations (NGOs) in public rental housing (PRH) estates.

Background

2. To promote neighbourliness in PRH estates, in July 2009 the Subsidised Housing Committee of the Housing Authority (HA) endorsed the enhanced partnering arrangements. Under the enhanced arrangements, EMACs can use up to 30% of the EMAC funds to carry out community building activities in partnership with NGOs according to the needs and preference of individual estates.

3. We briefed Members on the implementation of the partnering arrangements in November 2009. In this paper, we will report on the outcome of a review of the new arrangements and the progress of this initiative based on the experience gained and feedback collected after holding a range of activities.

Review Findings

4. After implementing this new initiative for some two years, we have conducted a review with major findings highlighted below-

Functions Held

5. The initiative was well received by residents with some 510 partnering functions held during the period from October 2009 to March 2011. Activities focused on “Elderly” and “Education/health/training activities/learning programmes” are the most well-received, each representing 30% of the total number of functions held. Other functions cover disabled, new arrivals, ethnic minority group, families/women/children, youth and environmental protection/greening activities.

6. In general, EMAC's evaluation has been very positive with an average of 98% of the activities being assessed as satisfactory and above. They opined that the partnering functions are effective in fostering neighbourliness and strengthening the sense of belonging among residents.

Funding Allotment and Expenditure

7. To ensure reasonable control over the use of EMAC funds, the funding for each partnering function is capped at \$30,000 or \$50,000 depending in the number of flats of the estates^{Note}. Up to end March 2011, the actual expenditure of some 310 functions was below \$30,000 whereas some 200 functions were over \$30,000. Of the functions held by large estates, only 20 (5.4%) fully utilised the maximum funding allotment of \$50,000. This reflected that the current funding ceiling for partnering functions was able to meet the requirement of respective services or activities.

Control and Monitoring

8. To ensure the effective use of public money, funds for partnering functions are kept under stringent control. EMAC Chairmen would ensure that NGOs have exercised utmost prudence and upheld the principle of value for money in using EMAC funds. Project proposals and budgets of selected NGOs are thoroughly vetted, discussed and endorsed by the EMAC with reference to the standard expense and procurement guidelines adopted by District Councils. The actual expenses incurred are paid on a reimbursement basis.

9. In addition, EMAC Chairmen will submit an assessment report on each completed activity whilst the Housing Department Headquarters will conduct random checks on NGOs' proposals and final reports on a quarterly basis.

Way Forward

10. In view of the wide support from EMACs and positive evaluation of the arrangements, the HA will continue the current partnering arrangements with NGOs and conduct a review on the overall arrangements in two years' time.

^{Note} A ceiling of \$30,000 for small estates with 3 000 flats or less, and \$50,000 for large estates with 3 001 flats or more.

11. Members are invited to note the review findings on the enhanced partnering arrangements among EMACs and NGOs to promote neighbourliness in PRH estates.

**Transport and Housing Bureau
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